

## A Review of Sarah J. Thiessen's Book

### *Splankna: The Redemption of Energy Healing for the Kingdom of God*

#### By Diane W. Hawkins

Having come to understand some of the energy dynamics of Lucifer's Kingdom, the issue of energy healing and energy psychotherapy is one that I have desired to understand more fully in order to evaluate it spiritually. Reading Thiessen's book was part of this exploration.

Thiessen describes energy as what causes movement at the smallest level of life (p. 20). She equates this energy in the body with what the Chinese consider to be life force, or what they call Qi, or chi (p. 21). According to Chinese philosophy this energy moves along micro-thin pathways called "meridians" within the human body (p. 25). Acupuncture points are spots along these meridians that are thought to correlate to specific bodily functions and are used in energy psychology (p. 25) as well as energy healing.

Thiessen states that the two elements of energy psychology are muscle testing and what she calls "circuitry + intention" (p. 147). Muscle testing, she explains, is merely a method of connecting with the subconscious mind, which is aware of all things having to do with the person, and letting it speak through the interruption of energy to the muscle (pp. 15, 49-50, 67). "Splankna," in fact, comes from the word used for "bowels" in Scripture—that which moves a person at a heart level. She equates this with the subconscious (p. 136). I do not see these as equivalent, however.

Emotions, she says, are stored in the body at an energetic level in the acupuncture or meridian points (p. 31). Energy psychology seeks to change the subconscious mind through the adjustment of the energy in these meridian points (pp. 37-38). Activating a meridian point while thinking about an emotion seemingly resolves the stored emotional charge connected to it, though they don't know why (pp. 38-39).

While Thiessen attempts to analyze the possible connections to New Age dynamics and witchcraft that could make energy healing unsafe and illegitimate for the Christian, her lack of understanding the energy systems of the realm of darkness makes her analysis incomplete. She has also made some faulty assumptions and unfounded jumps in logic in reaching her conclusions, which attempt to justify or "redeem" this Chinese practice linked to the Hindu gods for Christians.

#### Faulty Assumptions

Thiessen is to be commended for wanting to know God's will on this subject. Her process in doing this, however, was to ask God to align her heart with His and then to trust her heart to guide her (p. 14). This assumes that her heart would stay perfectly in tune with God throughout the entire process and not be influenced at all by her own humanity with its particular history, desires, personal leanings, or imaginations. She also firmly believes that demonic influence could not be a factor because people are always aware if they are under such (p. 149), another unfounded assumption that does not reflect the experience of many.

She also concluded that muscle testing cannot be evil because she supposedly became aware of a demon through the use of muscle testing, cast it out, and then proved it was gone through muscle testing. This, she claimed, would not have happened if muscle testing were Satanic because he cannot cast out himself according to Luke 11:17 (pp. 16-17; 148-149). This, however, assumes that

demonization and deliverance can be determined by muscle testing and ignores the fact that muscle testing did not cast out the demon; she did.

### Faulty Conclusions

#### 1. The nature of energy

A big question in evaluating the legitimacy of energy healing and energy therapy is identifying what energy or energies are being “read” and manipulated in the body. The Chinese, who originated energy healing, believe it is the universal life force called “chi.” Thiessen seems willing to accept its designation as “chi” but does not see it as human life force. Instead, she relates it to the power of God’s word, or *logos*, that spoke everything into existence (pp. 85-89) and holds it together, according to Colossians 1:15-17 (cf. John 1:1-3). She states, “Thus the apologist, armed with a fully fleshed theology of the Spirit of God in the creation, can say to a New Age energy healer, ‘What you call the universal life force, I now proclaim to you in its fullness is really the person of the Spirit of God who made you and commands us to repent’” (p. 89).

While this is a legitimate possibility to raise, she then makes a major jump in equating the creative “word” of God with His intent, or His thoughts, behind His words. While *logos* can also be defined as “the reasoning faculty as that power of the soul which is the basis of speech, rationality,”<sup>1</sup> the dynamic, creative work of God is specifically stated in Scripture to have occurred through His *spoken* word. God *spoke* the world into existence. Nowhere does it say that He *thought* it into existence.

From here, Thiessen jumps to the conclusion that since we are made in the image of God, we possess a lesser degree of the power of *logos* and can change things through the energy of our thoughts and intents, which is what she believes happens in Splankna (p. 90). In Splankna activating a meridian point while thinking about an emotion supposedly resolves the stored emotional charge connected to it (p. 38). Thiessen states that the directed thinking done in energy psychology does not manipulate the person’s life force. Instead, she says, “I am making grateful use of the privilege He [God] has given me to affect the energetic level [of the person’s body] with my intention. . . . I am being His hands and feet” (p. 91).

Her conclusion seems to be that God’s *logos* is the energy that created and holds all matter together, the energy that flows through the so-called meridians of the body, and the energy that is directed through thoughts to bring change to the energy in the meridians. I am not convinced that these are all the same type of energy; nor am I convinced that any of them has been proven to be truly God’s *logos*. That is only her hypothesis; yet her legitimization of energy psychology and desire to separate it from Eastern religions and New Age philosophy is built on this unproven hypothesis. She even goes so far as to imply that one can change the nature of the energy being used in certain practices from evil to good by what you think about it because nothing is inherently evil. I cannot buy this.

#### 2. The nature of evil

Thiessen also sets out to prove that energy healing is not witchcraft since many might say that muscle testing is similar to using a Ouiji board or some other means of divination. The

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<sup>1</sup> Zodhiates, S. (2000). *The complete word study dictionary: New Testament* (electronic ed.). Chattanooga, TN: AMG Publishers.

premise for her argument against this is her firm belief that nothing in God's creation is evil in itself (p. 94). Everything we know as evil first belonged to God and was stolen by Satan and twisted for evil (pp. 95, 124, 128). Therefore, anything considered to be evil can be redeemed. According her, "it's theological fallacy to say that anything *belongs* to the enemy and has no redemptive element" (p. 128).

To support this, she points out how many biblical practices mimic witchcraft practices, such as Aaron's rod that budded, the bronze serpent, the Urim and Thummim, Joseph's divining cup, etc. (pp. 120-122, 167-168). She therefore concludes that "the structures used in witchcraft are not effective because they are inherently evil. They are effective because originally God designed them and made them to be effective. The enemy only warped them for evil use." Similarly, "if combining touch and thought is effective for helping the body resolve trauma, it is not because the enemy made it so, no matter how many people have used it under his authority. It is because God made it so" (129). Thiessen's perspective seems to be that God made the structures to be effective as if it is the structures themselves that produce the results rather than the spiritual entities one is utilizing to operate the structures.

This means, in her opinion, that the energy system of the body, muscle testing, or intention are not inherently evil (p. 128). Therefore, one must look at the "posture of heart" of the person using the structures or who one sees to be God when performing the act (p. 119). She acknowledges that a person could be doing the "intention and circuitry" of energy psychology as a form of witchcraft if that person understands the energy he is manipulating to be the universal "god" force and has no focus on the true God, who created that mechanism in the body. It all depends on whether one is influencing others with touch and intention "unto God" or not, whether he is doing it in obedience to Him or in rebellion (pp. 130-131).

Her point is that even if the energy meridians are used by false gods and evil entities, they can be redeemed and used for purposes of good. Here is where she seems to think that *how one thinks about the energy somehow changes what it is*. Even if I believe that I can have an effect on how energy behaves through my thoughts, it is a huge jump to believe that I can change the nature of the energy itself through how I think about it. I cannot accept, as Thiessen seems to present, that it is a matter of if I believe it is connected to a false god, then it is, and if I believe it is the creative force/word of God, then it is. *How one thinks about something does not change what it is!* Thiessen also does not seem to recognize that people can sincerely practice something, thinking they are doing it unto God, and be blinded and deceived about its demonic source. (See *The Beautiful Side of Evil* by Johanna Michaelsen.)

If this energy is truly chi, it is energy emanating from the god Kundalini, who is also known as the Queen of Heaven, the feminine side of Lucifer (Lucifera), and the false holy spirit. However powerful I might think my thoughts are, I cannot change Kundalini nor the energy coming from her into something good. Therefore evaluating the validity of working with the energy meridians has to go beyond considering the "heart posture" of the person implementing the energy healing or psychology to considering much more clearly just what energy flows through those meridians.

In addition, her concept of redeeming what is evil is not grounded in Scripture. Evil people can be transformed through the shed blood of Jesus Christ and the sanctifying power of the Holy Spirit. Contaminated things can be purified through a set protocol. However, God's

Word never speaks of redeeming witchcraft or other evil practices using ungodly energies. Instead, it declares them to be abominable and commands the people of God to separate themselves from them (Lev. 18; Rom. 12:9; 2 Cor. 6:17. etc.). New Testament converts were instructed to burn all of their witchcraft books (Acts 19:19), definitely indicating that they had no redemptive value. They were connected to an evil power and needed to be destroyed by fire.

In addition to feeling that anything evil can be redeemed and used “unto God” by Christians, she amazingly concludes, after examining the dynamics of witchcraft, “The truth is that the occult is not very powerful” (p. 116). I guess that is based on her belief that you can simply change evil to good by your thoughts. Nowhere does God indicate in Scripture that we can do this with anything evil. The Bible teaches that we have a very real enemy against whom we must stand with strong spiritual weapons, not human weapons like our thoughts (Eph. 6:10-17; 2 Cor. 10:4). Yes, we can overcome him by our faith (Eph. 6:16) the blood of the Lamb and the Word of our testimony (Rev. 12:11), but we cannot change the nature of who he is.

### 3. The line between good and evil

Thiessen’s belief in the redeemability of all evil also leads her to the point of no longer seeing a clear line of distinction between good and evil based on practice. What is good or evil is determined first of all, she says, by how a person interprets what he observes. Thus New Age practices are wrong because of their philosophy and interpretations of their observation of essentially neutral things (p. 98). From her point of view these same practices can be redeemed, *if one interprets them differently*, again apparently believing that thought alone can change the nature of something.

Her conclusion is that “The lines of righteousness cannot be easily drawn in behavior. They are drawn in the heart—in Lordship. What makes New Age and witchcraft (and any other practice) abominable to God is the rebellion and idolatry within them. If you can remove those things, they can be okay for the Christian.

Once again, I cannot accept her beliefs here. I think that Scripture reflects a much clearer line between good and evil. If evil can be redeemed and changed to good just by one’s heart attitude or interpretation of it, I don’t think that God would be telling us to “abhor what is evil and cling to what is good” (Rom. 12:9) and proclaiming woe “to those who call evil good and good evil” (Isa. 5:30). Thiessen’s theology on these things is coming from her own mind and not Scripture.

Even Thiessen believes that redeeming energy tools can be dangerous if not kept within strict boundaries (p. 158). According to her, any healing protocol must pass these tests: 1) Does it deny the hierarchy and personhood of God? 2) Does it pursue special knowledge or special power? 3) Does it invoke anyone or anything other than God Himself?” (p. 154). I don’t think that a healing protocol has to invoke something outside of God Himself to be dangerous for a Christian. I believe using the energy of a false god, which can be ignorantly done, can make it dangerous.

To Thiessen acupuncture—or energy healing or energy psychology—is good or bad depending on who the practitioner believes in and what kind of information is sought through muscle testing. If the person asks a question that does not pertain to information about that particular person, which the subconscious mind would know, then a demon could respond,

she says (pp. 149-150). So my question to her would be, “If a demon could respond to a wrong question, what keeps it from responding to a right question?”

## Missed Concepts

### 1. The energy dynamics of the evil spiritual realm

I really wonder if Thiessen understands the energy dynamics of the evil spiritual realm sufficiently to analyze the possibilities of what is involved in energy healing or energy psychology. She relates it to God’s *logos*, or the power of His word that brought everything into existence and holds it all together. This is indeed a possibility, especially for God’s original creation, but without understanding the other options more thoroughly, she cannot successfully rule them out.

As we have said, the Chinese consider the energy flowing on the meridians to be a universal life force, which they call “chi.” Just like we know that God Himself is an entity of power and is integrally connected with the Holy Spirit, who represents His power in a disembodied way, so chi is the disembodied energy associated with Kundalini. Kundalini goes by differing names in different cultures, including Luciferia (the feminine side of Lucifer), Queen of Heaven, and Mother Earth, the power seemingly behind witchcraft, which Thiessen examined. Interestingly, Kundalini is also known as the “false holy spirit” in the West. If this is truly what is flowing along the energy meridians of the body, we want nothing to do with it as Christians. It cannot be changed to be something else simply by our thinking about it differently.

While I cannot prove what this energy is either, what the Chinese believe makes a lot of sense to me in connection with the Serpent’s promise in Genesis 3:4-5. The meridians supposedly carrying chi energy are divided into yin and yang meridians. These are the black and white powers of the realm of darkness that are also connected with black and white magic. Again, I cannot prove it, but God has impressed upon me that they are integrally connected to the good and evil of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. When kept in balance their effect is seemingly neutral.

If these powers are connected to the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, I do not believe that they are part of God’s original creation of man. I would like to suggest that possibly man acquired this energy system when Satan gained dominion over mankind when Adam and Eve ate of the forbidden Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. God had good reason to warn them not to eat of it. The consequence would be death. They would not only have their spirits cut off from connection with God but their bodies would be subject to decay and death.

The serpent, however, told them that they would not die, but if they would follow his bidding, they would have their eyes opened (enlightenment) and be like the gods, knowing good and evil (yin and yang). He was offering them an alternative path of connection to supernatural enlightenment, which was the origin of his counterfeit religious system from which all false religions branched out. This counterfeit enlightenment is offered by Kundalini, who is known in Scripture as the Queen of Heaven, but is also seen as the feminine side of Lucifer and known as Luciferia. She might, in fact, be considered the beautiful side of evil through whom Lucifer has been deceiving mankind ever since the Garden of Eden.

The Hindus believe that Kundalini is established in a dormant state at the base of everyone's spine (pp. 60-61) in a structure known as the (counterfeit) tree of life. I believe they see this as the source of the meridian system that extends throughout the body. The Kundalini or serpent power (interesting that even the Chinese equate Kundalini with the serpent) that flows on this system has two main branches that spiral upward around the person's spine. These are seen as being male and female but also seemingly as the yin and yang powers. Lucifer and the Queen of Heaven (known as Kundalini or Lucifera) are also represented by black and white. Lucifer represents the black side of his kingdom and the Queen of Heaven (Lucifera) the white side. Of course the white side is quite deceptively "good" in its appearance and effects. (Yoga, acupuncture, and white magic can produce good results, but we must not be beguiled by their true nature.) Possibly these black and white powers also represent life and death and the struggle between them that was introduced to mankind as part of the Fall.

The Chinese energy healing works to keep these dueling powers/energies in balance. They also believe that if one can "awaken" Kundalini from its dormant state in the counterfeit tree of life at the base of the spine, she can rise up through the trunk of the body to the top of the head, opening chakras, as energy portals, along the midline of the body and eventually uniting the person with "the divine," who is Lucifer, and allowing him or her to enter the Realm of Enlightenment promised at the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil.

## 2. The dangers of interacting with the subconscious mind

Another piece that must be brought into the picture in evaluating energy psychology is the lurking dangers involved in connecting with the subconscious mind. Thiessen believes that muscle testing is tapping into the subconscious mind, which knows everything about a person.

Tapping into the subconscious mind may be harmless in many cases. However, anyone who does this must be aware of possible accesses to the evil spiritual realm that can occur through deep levels of a person's subconscious.

This is where clairvoyants, psychics, mediums, Satanists, and even some hypnotists descend into to connect with supernatural beings, such as spirit guides, as well as portals for projecting themselves outside of the body. Therefore, while Thiessen believes that the muscles are revealing only what is in the subconscious mind, if the person is contaminated with demons or spirit guides, they could also potentially respond. I do not believe that this possibility can be ruled out, especially with individuals who have any kind of occult history.

## Conclusion

Having read the book, I cannot buy Thiessen's views or arguments for the legitimacy of energy healing or energy psychology for Christians. For me, it all depends on the nature of the energy flowing on the meridians—not the heart focus of the practitioner, although that is important too. At this point I believe that the energy is more likely than not connected with Kundalini and Satan's counterfeit religious system introduced in the Fall, as the concepts of it fit so well with the serpent's words in Genesis 3:4-5. Why should we seek physical or psychological healing through something so closely tied to Satan's substitute plan for mankind rather than through more God ordained ways?

Physically, God has specifically said that life (force) is carried in the blood (Lev. 17:11), not energy meridians. He has also designed our circulatory and nervous systems to bring life force and energy to every cell of our body (just what the meridian system is purported to do).

Psychologically, He has said, “You shall know the truth and the truth shall set you free” (John 8:32). Energy healing has nothing to do with bringing truth to the false beliefs the person is carrying. Even Thiessen recognizes that it is not an ideal way to bring healing. She says, “Muscle testing was clearly not God’s original design. Obviously, we were not originally intended to need to push on each other’s arms to deal with our hearts. I think it is something like a hearing aid for later days” (p. 66).

While muscle testing seems to be used in close connection with meridian work, I’m not sure that it truly uses the meridian system rather than God’s original energy system operating through the muscles and nerves of the body. Perhaps it may be a valid way to access the subconscious mind, keeping in mind the potential demonic connections in doing so mentioned above.